No. 75-307

Supreme Court, U. S.
FILED
AUG 28 1975
MICHAEL RODAK, JR., CLERK

In the Supreme Court of the United States

OCTOBER TERM, 1974

FRANK J. KUTA,

Petitioner,

vs.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Respondent.

PETITION FOR A WRIT OF CERTIORARI TO THE UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS FOR THE SEVENTH CIRCUIT

GEORGE F. CALLAGHAN
53 W. Jackson Blvd.
Chicago, Illinois 60604

JULIUS LUCIUS ECHELES
CAROLYN JAFFE
35 East Wacker Drive
Chicago, Illinois 60601
Attorneys for Petitioner

UNITED STATES LAW PRINTING CO., CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60618 (312) 525-6581

INDEX

PAGE

Opinion Below 1

Jurisdiction 2

Questions Presented 2

Constitutional Provisions and Statutes Involved 3

Statement of the Case 4

Reasons for Granting the Writ 8

1. The evidence was insufficient to establish that petitioner violated the Hobbs Act, in that there was no proof of effect on interstate commerce, nor that petitioner committed extortion. Petitioner's conviction is based on an unconscionable overextension and misreading of the Hobbs Act absent any proper basis for federal jurisdiction 8

2. Petitioner's rights to due process of law and to trial by jury were violated where the court failed to instruct the jury as to the definition of "commerce" at all, and the instructions concerning commerce which were given amounted to a directed verdict against petitioner as to effect on commerce, an essential element of the offense 14

3. Petitioner's Fifth Amendment privilege against self-incrimination was violated when he was required to produce—pursuant to subpoena and at a time when the indictment already was set down for trial—financial

PAGE

records of the law partnership with which he practiced, where the nature of the partnership was shown to be such that the records should have been treated as petitioner's personal records for Fifth Amendment purposes. The Seventh Circuit's ruling that the privilege was inapplicable conflicts with principles announced by this Court in *Bellis* v. *United States*, 417 U.S. 85 18

4. Petitioner's right to a fair trial was violated by the prosecutor's improper conduct during closing argument. In particular, this Court, in the exercise of its supervisory power over the lower federal courts, should review the novel, unprecedented rule adopted by the Seventh Circuit which permits portions of the transcript to be read to the jury during closing argument, since such practice only can serve improperly to highlight selected portions of the evidence 25

5. If petitioner's conviction for having violated the Hobbs Act (Count 2) is overturned, petitioner may not stand convicted for having made a false statement on his income tax return for his failure to have reported, as income, the money which he allegedly received as a part of the Hobbs Act charge 29

Conclusion 29

Appendix A—Opinion of the United States Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit .....App. 1

Appendix B—Order denying petition for rehearing App. 15

AUTHORITIES CITED

Cases

PAGE

Bellis v. United States, 417 U.S. 85 (1974) 2, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24

Boyd v. United States, 116 U.S. 616 (1886) 18

Corley v. United States, 365 F.2d 884 (D.C. Cir. 1966) 28

Cross v. United States, 353 F.2d 454 (D.C. Cir. 1965) .. 28

Ginsberg v. United States, 257 F.2d 950 (5 Cir. 1958) .. 26

Greenberg v. United States, 280 F.2d 472 (5 Cir. 1960) 28

Hall v. United States, 419 F.2d 582 (5 Cir. 1969) 28

Jones v. United States, 338 F.2d 553 (D.C. Cir. 1964) .. 28

King v. United States, 372 F.2d 383 (D.C. Cir. 1967) .. 28

Mims v. United States, 375 F.2d 135 (5 Cir. 1967) 17

People v. Hoggs, 17 Ill.App.3d 67, 307 N.E.2d 800 (1 Dist. 1974) 26

People v. Smith, 105 Ill.App.2d 8, 245 N.E.2d 23 (1 Dist. 1969) 26

People v. Willy, 301 Ill. 307, 133 N.E. 859 (1921) 26

Schwachter v. United States, 237 F.2d 640 (6 Cir. 1956) 16

Screws v. United States, 325 U.S. 91 (1945) 15

Stirone v. United States, 361 U.S. 212 (1960) 8, 15, 17

Tillotson v. Boughner, 350 F.2d 663 (7 Cir. 1965) .. 24

Ullmann v. United States, 350 U.S. 422 (1956) 23

United States v. Battaglia, 394 F.2d 304 (7 Cir. 1968) .. 15

PAGE

United States v. Braasch, 505 F.2d 139 (7 Cir. 1974) ..10, 11

United States v. Enmons, 410 U.S. 396 (1973) 14

United States v. Gollin, 166 F.2d 123 (3 Cir. 1948) ..16, 17

United States v. Green, 246 F.2d 155 (7 Cir. 1957) 17

United States v. Handman, 447 F.2d 853 (7 Cir. 1971) .. 28

United States v. Hyde, 448 F.2d 815 (5 Cir. 1971) 17

United States v. Kramer, 355 F.2d 89 (7 Cir. 1966) 15

United States v. Lamerson, 457 F.2d 371 (5 Cir. 1972) 28

United States v. Pranno, 385 F.2d 387 (7 Cir. 1967) 13

United States v. Raub, 177 F.2d 312 (7 Cir. 1949) 17

United States v. Skinner, 437 F.2d 164 (5 Cir. 1971) 17

United States v. Staszcuk, 502 F.2d 874 (7 Cir. 1974), rev'd in part on other grounds en banc, slip op. No. 73-1869 (May 16, 1975), cert. pending, No. 74-1574 .... 12, 13, 14

Williamson v. United States, 332 F.2d 123 (5 Cir. 1962) 15

Wolf v. United States, 36 F.2d 450 (7 Cir. 1929) 16

Other Authorities

United States Constitution, Amendment 5 .....2, 3, 18, 23

United States Constitution, Amendment 6 4

18 U.S.C. 1341 5

18 U.S.C. 1951 ..... 4, 5

18 U.S.C. 1951(b)(3) 14

26 U.S.C. 7206(1) 5

28 U.S.C. 1254(1) 2

Supreme Court Rule 22.2 2

In the Supreme Court of the United States

OCTOBER TERM, 1974

No.

FRANK J. KUTA,

Petitioner,

vs.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Respondent.

PETITION FOR A WRIT OF CERTIORARI TO THE UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS FOR THE SEVENTH CIRCUIT

Petitioner, Frank J. Kuta, prays that a writ of certiorari be issued to review the judgment of the United States Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit.

Opinion Below

The opinion of the Court of Appeals, not yet reported, is reprinted as Appendix A, *infra.*

Jurisdiction

The opinion of the Court of Appeals was entered on June 30, 1975. Petitioner's petition for rehearing and suggestion for rehearing in banc, timely filed, was denied on July 29, 1975. (App. B) The jurisdiction of this Court is invoked pursuant to 28 U.S.C. 1254(1) and Rule 22.2 of the Rules of this Court.

Questions Presented

1. Does it not require an unconscionable overextension of the Hobbs Act and of federal jurisdiction to uphold a conviction for affecting commerce by extortion under color of official right, absent proof both of effect on commerce and of extortion?

2. Were petitioner's rights to due process of law and to trial by jury violated, in a Hobbs Act prosecution, where the court failed to instruct the jury as to the definition of "commerce" at all, and the instructions concerning commerce which were given amounted to a directed verdict against defendant as to effect on commerce, an essential element of the offense?

3. Was it not a violation of petitioner's Fifth Amendment privilege against self-incrimination to require him to produce, pursuant to subpoena and at a time when the indictment already was set down for trial, financial records of the law partnership with which he practiced, where the nature of the partnership was shown to be such that the records should have been treated as petitioner's personal records for Fifth Amendment purposes? Does not the Seventh Circuit's ruling that the privilege was inapplicable conflict with principles announced by this Court in *Bellis* v. *United States,* 417 U.S. 85?

4. Was petitioner's constitutional right to a fair trial violated by the prosecutor's improper conduct during closing argument, where:

> (A) the court permitted the prosecutor to state that the crucial prosecution witness was "telling the truth";
>
> (B) the prosecutor made various serious misstatements of the evidence; and
>
> (C) the court permitted the prosecutor to read from the trial transcript;

and, further, should this Court, in the exercise of its supervisory power over the lower federal courts, review the novel, unprecedented rule adopted by the Seventh Circuit which permits portions of the transcript to be read to the jury during closing argument, since such practice only can serve improperly to highlight selected portions of the evidence?

5. If the Hobbs Act conviction is overturned, may petitioner nonetheless still stand convicted for having made a false statement on his income tax return for his failure to have reported, as income, the money which was allegedly received as a part of the alleged Hobbs Act violation?

Constitutional Provisions and Statutes Involved

The Fifth Amendment to the United States Constitution provides, in pertinent part:

> "No person shall be . . . compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself, nor be deprived of life, liberty or property, without due process of law; . . ."

The Sixth Amendment to the United States Constitution provides, in pertinent part:

> "In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a . . . trial, by an impartial jury . . ."

Section 1951, Title 18, United States Code, provides in pertinent part:

> (a) Whoever in any way or degree obstructs, delays, or affects commerce or the movement of any article or commodity in commerce, by robbery or extortion or attempts or conspires so to do, or commits or threatens physical violence to any person or property in furtherance of a plan or purpose to do anything in violation of this section shall be fined not more than $10,000 or imprisoned not more than twenty years, or both.
>
> (b) As used in this section—
>
> • • •
>
> (2) The term "extortion" means the obtaining of property from another, with his consent, induced by wrongful use of actual or threatened force, violence, or fear, or under color of official right.
>
> (3) The term "commerce" means commerce within the District of Columbia, or any Territory or Possession of the United States; all commerce between any point in a State, Territory, Possession, or the District of Columbia and any point outside thereof; all commerce between points within the same State through any place outside such State; and all other commerce over which the United States has jurisdiction.
>
> • • •

STATEMENT OF THE CASE

Petitioner, Frank J. Kuta, a Chicago alderman during all times pertinent to this cause, was charged in a ten-count indictment (74 CR 22, superseding 73 CR 490) (R. 1)[1] with having violated the Hobbs Act, 18 U.S.C. 1951 (Counts 1, 2 and 3) and the mail fraud statute, 18 U.S.C. 1341 (Counts 4, 5, 6 and 7), and with having made false statements on his income tax returns by knowingly misstating his adjusted gross income (by omitting therefrom the monies he allegedly received via the Hobbs Act violations) for the years 1968, 1969 and 1970, respectively, in violation of 26 U.S.C. 7206(1) (Counts 8, 9 and 10).[2]

The jury acquitted petitioner on Counts 1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 10, but convicted him on Counts 2, 4 and 9 (those counts

---

[1] "A" refers to Appellant's Appendix; "R." to the Record on Appeal; and "Tr." to the Transcript of Proceedings; all are filed in the Court of Appeals in No. 74-1920.

[2] Count 1 alleged that on or about July 8, 1968, petitioner affected commerce by extortion, in that he obtained $4,000 from Theodore Gaw, with Gaw's consent being induced under color of official right, in order to procure a zoning change on property in the 6400 block of Narragansett Ave. in Chicago, Illinois, in the 23rd Ward, of which ward defendant was Alderman.

Count 2 alleged that on or about December 1, 1969, petitioner affected commerce by extortion, in that he obtained $1500 from Sam Vanchieri, whose consent was induced under color of official right, in order to procure a zoning change on property in the 5300 block of S. Kilbourn, 23rd Ward, Chicago.

Count 3 alleged that on or about May 11, 1970, petitioner affected commerce by extortion, in that he obtained $3000 from Al C. Allen, whose consent was induced under color of official right, in order to procure a zoning change as to the same property as that alleged in Count 1.

Count 4 alleged mail fraud in connection with the property alleged in Count 2; and Counts 5, 6 and 7 alleged mail fraud in connection with the three parcels of property alleged in Counts 1 and 3.

Counts 8, 9 and 10 charged that when petitioner filed his income tax returns for the years 1968, 1969, and 1970, respectively, he knowingly falsely stated his adjusted gross income by omitting therefrom amounts equal to the payments he allegedly received in those years as alleged in Counts 1, 2 and 3, respectively.

alleging offenses to which prosecution witness Vanchieri's testimony was crucial).

The court granted petitioner's motion for acquittal as to Count 4 (mail fraud count; A. 9), but denied the motion as to Counts 2 and 9. Motions for new trial and in arrest of judgment were also denied. (A. 9).

Petitioner was sentenced to six months in custody. (A. 9).

• • • •

In summary, the government's evidence relating to Counts 2 and 9[3] is as follows:

Petitioner, an attorney and Alderman of the 23rd Ward, Chicago, Illinois, was a member of the City Council. Sometime before July, 1969, Sam Vanchieri, a realtor in Chicago, contacted petitioner concerning zoning changes which Vanchieri desired to obtain as to certain property located in the 23rd Ward. (Tr. 129) Petitioner and Vanchieri had known one another for some years, but never had any transactions wherein Vanchieri paid petitioner anything. (Tr. 125) At this initial meeting, money was never discussed. (Tr. 129, 145)

On October 10, 1969, the rezoning ordinance was approved by the Zoning Committee (Tr. 49), and on November 17, 1969, it was passed by the City Council. (Tr. 129)

On December 1, 1969, petitioner phoned Vanchieri—not mentioning money—and said he would like to see Vanchieri. Vanchieri, in possession of a blank check from his

[3] Details of the evidence necessary to petitioner's arguments attacking Counts 2 and 9 are fully set forth during the course of this Petition where pertinent, and are not repeated herein to avoid unnecessary duplication.

own checking account, went to petitioner's office and—according to Vanchieri's own testimony—Vanchieri asked petitioner, "How much do I owe you," and petitioner replied, "'$1500," which Vanchieri proceeded to pay petitioner via filling out the check he had brought with him. (Tr. 130-31) The check was made payable by Vanchieri to himself, and on the back bore the words, "Okay, Atty. Kuta," in defendant's handwriting, followed by petitioner's account number. (Tr. 134) Vanchieri testified that he, not petitioner, brought up the issue of money. (Tr. 131, 144-45)

Vanchieri testified: "I thought I owed him [petitioner] something for not objecting to the zoning." (Tr. 140).

He did *not* testify that money was ever discussed prior to December 1, 1969, or that petitioner ever threatened to oppose rezoning if not paid, or that he ever agreed to refrain from opposing the rezoning in exchange for money. (Tr. 131, 144-45)

The government, in support of Count 9, presented evidence that petitioner's tax return for 1969 did not reflect this alleged $1500 payment. (Tr. 1021)

Petitioner testified that Vanchieri, whom he had known for some time, came to petitioner's law offices and explained that he needed to cash a check, but was not known to anyone at the bank located in the same building as petitioner's offices, at which bank petitioner had an account. Petitioner testified that he wrote, "Okay, Atty. Kuta," on the back of the check, and supplied Vanchieri with his (petitioner's) bank account number, so as to enable Vanchieri to cash the check at the bank, where petitioner was well known. (Tr. 1418-21)

Petitioner in his testimony also denied having illegally received the cash payments as alleged in Counts 1 and 3, and the jury acquitted him as to those Counts, *inter alia*.

REASONS FOR GRANTING THE WRIT

1.

The evidence was insufficient to establish that petitioner violated the Hobbs Act, in that there was no proof of effect on interstate commerce, nor that petitioner committed extortion. Petitioner's conviction is based on an unconscionable overextension and misreading of the Hobbs Act absent any proper basis for federal jurisdiction.

To sustain a conviction under the Hobbs Act, two essential elements must be alleged and proven:

> ". . . interference with commerce, and extortion. Both elements have to be charged. Neither is surplusage and neither can be treated as surplusage. The charge that interstate commerce is affected is critical since the Federal Government's jurisdiction of this crime rests only on that interference." *Stirone* v. *United States,* 361 U.S. 212, 218 (1960).

Here, the government's case fails to establish either that defendant committed extortion or that he "did obstruct, delay and affect commerce" as charged in Count 2.

Concerning Count 2, all the government's evidence demonstrates is that some time *after* passage of the zoning ordinance in which Vanchieri was interested, Vanchieri received a phone call from petitioner and went to see him at petitioner's office.[4] (Tr. 130) Money had not, up to

[4] The rezoning ordinance was passed by the City Council on November 17, 1969, (Tr. 129), and, according to Vanchieri, petitioner phoned him on December 1, 1969, the date on which petitioner allegedly received the money from him. (Tr. 130) This was their sole and only contact.

that point, even been discussed between the two of them, nor had they ever had any transactions together from which Vanchieri could reasonably have concluded that payment was necessary to prevent petitioner from objecting to the zoning ordinance. Entering petitioner's office, Vanchieri asked, "How much do I owe you," and petitioner said, "$1500," which Vanchieri proceeded to pay by check.[5] (Tr. 131)

Even if Vanchieri believed that he "owed" petitioner something, payment of the $1500 *after the fact,* that is, *after* the rezoning had been passed by the City Council, cannot be deemed extortionate, absent any conversations to that effect prior to action by the City Council, and absent any prior dealings between the parties concerning such matters.

The Seventh Circuit's legal conclusions are not supported by the facts of record:

> "[Since] it was Kuta's office [as alderman] that brought forth Vanchieri's payment, . . . the defendant committed extortion. [App. A. p. 4] Although the payment occurred after the zoning amendment was passed, and the evidence does not indicate that prior to its passage payment was explicitly discussed, the jury could infer that an agreement existed from the fact that payment was expected by the defendant, and

[5] This, of course, is Vanchieri's version of the transaction. Petitioner testified that Vanchieri's $1500 check bore petitioner's signature on the back purely as an accommodation to Vanchieri, who wished to cash the check at the bank located in petitioner's office building, at which bank he (Vanchieri) was not known. (Tr. 1418-21) It is petitioner's position herein that, even taking the evidence most favorably to the government—*i.e.*, assuming, *arguendo,* the truth of Vanchieri's testimony—the evidence is insufficient to establish the offense.

> that Vanchieri so understood. . . . This supports a finding that there existed a tacit understanding according to which the defendant refrained from objecting to the zoning amendment in return for a subsequent payment of money, and that this restraint affected the passage of the amendment. Consequently, the jury could find that the extortion affected commerce, and that the defendant thereby violated the Hobbs Act." (App. A. pp. 5-6)

These conclusions of law are based, not upon facts, but upon inferences drawn from still other inferences. The facts remain that the zoning amendment was passed without any discussion between petitioner and Vanchieri regarding payment, that petitioner expressed no objection to the proposed amendment (with no discussion of money), and that at the time payment was made,[6] the amendment (affecting commerce) already had been passed

The second and third degree inferences which the court had to draw in order to justify affirmance upon these facts are insufficient in law to support conviction herein.

Moreover, the court's reliance on other cases concerning this issue is misplaced. *United States* v. *Braasch,* 505 F.2d 139, 151 (7 Cir. 1974), states (as noted by the panel, App. A, p. 4), that:

> "The use of office to obtain payments is the crux of the statutory requirement of 'under color of official right'. . . So long as the motivation for the payment focuses on the recipient's office, the conduct falls within the ambit of 18 U.S.C. § 1951."

However, this language does not apply to the facts of the case at bar, where defendant did *not* perpetrate any such "conduct" as was perpetrated by the various defendants

[6] See footnote 5, *supra.*

in the *Braasch* case, wherein police officers were actively soliciting "protection money" from local tavernkeepers and other businessmen. To make the *Braasch* language applicable herein is to take a legal doctrine out of context and misapply it to an inapposite factual situation.

Literal interpretation of the quoted language from *Braasch* without reference to the factual context within which it arose amounts to punishing petitioner for the mere receipt of money after the fact without there having been any showing that any promise or expectation of payment was contemplated by petitioner. To punish him solely for the state of mind and actions of Vanchieri—which is what affirmance of his convictions herein amounts to—not induced by anything petitioner himself said or did, violates every basic precept of criminal justice.

By ruling that petitioner's receipt of $1500 from government witness Vanchieri under the circumstances of the case at bar constitutes a violation of the Hobbs Act (interference with interstate commerce by extortion) (Count 2), (App. A, pp. 2-6), the court in effect has eliminated the requirement that petitioner be proven to have *done* something in violation of the law. He stands convicted, via the court's ruling, because of Vanchieri's state of mind which admittedly was *not induced by anything petitioner said or did.* This flies in the face of basic principles of criminal jurisprudence which contemplate punishing a man only for what he himself has done, not for what the acts of others[7] may have caused another to believe.

[7] *I.e.,* others for whose acts and conduct petitioner cannot be held criminally liable. There is intimation that evidence pertaining to others regarding zoning could be considered by the jury in assessing petitioner's guilt (see App. A. pp. 4-5); however, absent any evidence that Vanchieri was *aware* of any such tranactions, there still is lacking any evidence that Vanchieri's payment was in any way induced by any *conduct* on petitioner's part.

The court's reliance on *United States* v. *Staszcuk,* 502 F.2d 874 (7 Cir. 1974), *rev'd in part on other grounds en banc,* Slip op. No. 73-1869 (May 16, 1975), (cert. pndg. No. 74-1574) (App. A, p. 5), is similarly misplaced. In *Staszcuk,* there was that essential ingredient which is entirely and conspicuously absent from the case at bar—a *prior agreement* by the alderman-defendant not to object to proposed zoning amendments. The Court found in *Staszcuk* that the payments were made to defendant by a "zoning consultant",

> "on behalf of his clients in return for defendant's agreement not to oppose their applications for zoning amendments . . ." 502 F.2d at 877.

Accordingly, the court concluded:

> "*To accept money in return for an agreement* not to oppose such applications—in effect to suspend independent judgment on the merits of such zoning changes—constitutes obtaining property from another, with his consent, induced under color of official right. The evidence supports defendant's convictions for extortion." *Id.* at 878. (Emphasis added.)

In the case at bar, however, *no* such agreement was demonstrated by the record, and the panel's inference of a "tacit agreement" is not supported by facts of record, but rather, impermissibly is based only upon inference piled upon inference.[8]

---

[8] Moreover, in *Staszcuk,* the court specifically found that the government had presented sufficient evidence of an alderman's influence over zoning applicants in his own ward from which the jury could conclude that petitioner's official functions encompassed unbiased consideration and treatment of zoning applications. 502 F.2d at 878. No similar evidence is of record in the instant case, nor would it be proper to assume such fact without any evidence from which it might properly be concluded.

Finally, from the evidence of record there is no basis from which the jury could properly conclude that there was any factual relationship between the rezoning and the subsequent payment to petitioner by Vanchieri. While the rezoning may have facilitated the use of materials from interstate commerce in the construction and furnishing of buildings which could not have been built under the prior zoning, there simply is no demonstrable connection between petitioner's receipt of the money and the prior rezoning.[9] Absent evidence of any such connection between petitioner's conduct and the eventual effect on commerce, the evidence is utterly insufficient to demonstrate that petitioner "did obstruct, delay and affect commerce" as charged in Count 2.

There was no evidence that money was ever discussed before December 1, 1969; no evidence that petitioner ever threatened to oppose rezoning if not paid; no evidence that petitioner ever agreed or even intimated that he would refrain from opposing the rezoning in exchange for a promise of future payment of money. Moreover, the buildings (using materials which had moved in interstate commerce) were not constructed until approximately a year after petitioner allegedly received the money from Vanchieri. (Tr. 206-09)

Whatever Vanchieri may have believed, such belief did not emanate from anything petitioner said or did. *Cf. United States* v. *Staszcuk, supra,* at 878. Nor was there here any threat to obstruct the rezoning prerequisite to the proposed construction unless petitioner were paid. *Cf. United States* v. *Pranno,* 385 F.2d 387 (7 Cir. 1967), where "delay would have been caused had the owner and contractor refused payment and defendants carried out their threat to withhold the permit." *Id.* at 390.

---

[9] See footnote 4, *supra.*

This case involves nothing more than the voluntary, unsolicited payment of money to an alderman which, if it is to be prosecuted, may and should be prosecuted pursuant to local law. The sole federal jurisdictional nexus—affecting commerce—is utterly absent upon these facts. See *United States* v. *Enmons,* 410 U.S. 396, 411-12 (1973).

Certiorari should be allowed so that this Court may speak to a proper construction of the Hobbs Act with a view toward curtailing the recent trend toward federal encroachment via use of the Act into matters of purely local concern.[10]

2.

Petitioner's rights to due process of law and to trial by jury were violated where the court failed to instruct the jury as to the definition of "commerce" at all, and the instructions concerning commerce which were given amounted to a directed verdict against petitioner as to effect on commerce, an essential element of the offense.

Absent from the trial court's charge is *any* definition, statutory or otherwise, of "commerce," an essential element of the Hobbs Act count. 18 U.S.C. 1951(b)(3).

Count 2 charged that petitioner interfered with commerce by extortion, by obtaining $1500 not rightfully due him from Vanchieri, whose consent was induced under color of official right.

---

[10] Current gross overextensions of the Hobbs Act, with an increasing disregard for the basis of federal jurisdiction, results in burdening the federal court system with matters of purely local concern, and renders the Act applicable to conduct to which it was never intended to apply. See, *e.g., United States* v. *Staszcuk, supra,* especially the pending petition for certiorari (No. 74-1579) filed June 13, 1975. There the Seventh Circuit has found the federal jurisdictional element satisfied merely by a showing of "reasonable probability" that commerce may be affected, absent any actual effect upon commerce.

To sustain a conviction under the Hobbs Act, two essential elements must be alleged and proven:

> ". . . interference with commerce, and extortion. Both elements have to be charged. Neither is surplusage and neither can be treated as surplusage. *The charge that interstate commerce is affected is critical since the Federal Government's jurisdiction of this crime rests only on that interference.*" *Stirone* v. *United States,* 361 U.S. 212, 218 (1960). (Emphasis added.)

It was incumbent upon the court properly to instruct the jury as to the statutory definition of the word "commerce": this the court utterly failed to do.[11]

> "In the final analysis it is not the parties who determine the charge the judge gives to the jury; the obligation rests squarely on the shoulders of the trial judge." *Williamson* v. *United States,* 332 F.2d 123, 132 (5 Cir. 1962).

And the Supreme Court has held, in *Screws* v. *United States,* 325 U.S. 91, 107 (1945):

> "And where the error is so fundamental as not to submit to the jury the essential ingredients of the only offense on which the conviction could rest, we think it necessary to take note of it on our own motion."

Here, defendant made timely objection to the court's omission of any definition of commerce from the charge. (Tr. 2185-86)

The interstate commerce question in a Hobbs Act case is an issue which must be submitted to the jury. *United States* v. *Kramer,* 355 F.2d 889, 899-90 (7 Cir. 1966); *United States* v. *Battaglia,* 394 F.2d 304, 312 (7 Cir. 1968).

---

[11] It should further be noted that the court did read to the jury the statutory definition of "extortion," (Tr. 2156), and elaborated thereon as pertinent to the evidence in the case at bar (Tr. 2156-57); however, nothing in the charge contained any definition of "commerce."

Similarly, under other criminal statutes depending upon a finding of commerce to sustain federal jurisdiction, it has uniformly been held that failure properly to instruct the jury as to this element constitutes reversible error. *Schwachter* v. *United States*, 237 F.2d 640, 644 (6 Cir. 1956) (Dyer Act); *Wolf* v. *United States*, 36 F.2d 450 (7 Cir. 1929) (Dyer Act); *United States* v. *Gollin*, 166 F.2d 123, 126 (3 Cir. 1948) (theft from interstate shipment).

Over objection,[12] the court instructed the jury with respect to Count 2 as follows:

> "In reference to the statutory requirement of the law that commerce be affected, you are instructed as a matter of law that there was such an effect on interstate commerce and the necessary Federal jurisdictional element is satisfied if you find beyond a reasonable doubt . . . in respect to Count 2, . . . that materials used in the construction or furnishing of buildings constructed in 1970 at 5316, 5318, and 5322 South Kilbourn . . . Avenue, Chicago, Illinois were manufactured or shipped from outside the state of Illinois, and that the buildings which were built on that Kilbourn Avenue property could not have been built under the pre-existing zoning ordinance." (Tr. 2157-58)

Although the charge as given leaves certain factual determinations to the jury, *i.e.*, whether materials or furnishings used in the buildings constructed on the Count 2 property in 1970 came from out of state, and whether the buildings could have been constructed under the pre-existing zoning ordinance, the jury was advised *as a matter of law* that, finding such facts to have been established, they *must*, not may, but *must* find that commerce was affected by

[12] In addition to objecting at the pre-charge conference on instructions, (Tr. 2184), petitioner also noted his continuing objection to such instruction, particularly in light of the court's failure to have instructed upon the definition of "commerce," after conclusion of the charge. (Tr. 2185-86)

petitioner's conduct vis â vis Vanchieri. Yet a real factual question was at issue, since the ordinance passed before the payment, and the construction utilizing materials from out of state took place about a year thereafter. (See p. 13, *supra*.)

This instruction is a partial directed verdict of guilty and an invasion of the province of the jury in derogation of defendant's right to trial by jury. Although the factual issues as noted above were delegated to the jury, removed from their consideration was the further factual question whether this state of facts, if found to exist, justified a finding that commerce was affected, an essential element of the Hobbs Act charge. *Stirone* v. *United States*, 361 U.S. 212, 215-18 (1960).

The court may not thus invade the province of the jury.

> "An instruction deciding a material fact issue as a matter of law adversely to the accused is regarded as a partial instructed verdict of guilty [which is] prohibited . . . ." *Mims* v. *United States*, 375 F.2d 135, 148 (5 Cir. 1967).

Accord: United States v. *Skinner*, 437 F.2d 164 (5 Cir. 1971); *United States* v. *Raub*, 177 F.2d 312, 316 (7 Cir. 1949); *United States* v. *Gollin*, 166 F.2d 123 (3 Cir. 1948).

Insofar as the cases cited by the Seventh Circuit (App. A, p. 7), *United States* v. *Green*, 246 F.2d 155 (7 Cir. 1957), and *United States* v. *Hyde*, 448 F.2d 815 (5 Cir. 1971), may support the court's conclusion, we submit that these holdings should to that extent be disapproved as in direct conflict with the constitutional right to trial by jury and as amounting to approval of partial direction of a verdict by the court concerning an essential element of the offense.

• • • •

The court's affirmance herein despite the trial court's direction of a verdict on the issue of effect on interstate

commerce, together with its omission of any definition of commerce from the jury charge, (App. A, pp. 6-8), amounts to permitting the trial court in every instance to rule on an essential element of the offense, in violation of petitioner's constitutional right to trial by jury upon the factual issues in the case. That the essential element happens to constitute a jurisdictional fact cannot suffice to justify what happened here.

3.

Petitioner's Fifth Amendment privilege against self-incrimination was violated when he was required to produce—pursuant to subpoena and at a time when the indictment already was set down for trial—financial records of the law partnership with which he practiced, where the nature of the partnership was shown to be such that the records should have been treated as petitioner's personal records for Fifth Amendment purposes. The Seventh Circuit's ruling that the privilege was inapplicable conflicts with principles announced by this Court in Bellis v. United States, 417 U.S. 85.

After return of the instant indictment, and at a time when the cause already had been set down for trial, the government served upon petitioner a subpoena duces tecum requiring him to produce the records of the law partnership of Kash and Kuta. Petitioner's motion to quash the subpoena was denied (R. 35) and, under threat of contempt, he duly produced the records specified in the subpoena.

The government proceeded to use in evidence against petitioner, over objection, various portions of said records and information contained therein. (Tr. 963)

The records which defendant was thus compelled to produce constituted private records immune from such seizure by the government by virtue of the Fifth Amendment.

Boyd v. *United States,* 116 U.S. 616 (1886). The trial and reviewing courts' reliance below upon *Bellis* v. *United States,* 417 U.S. 85 (1974), (App. A, pp. 8-12), is misplaced, since the instant case is materially distinguishable from the controlling facts in *Bellis.*[13]

---

[13] At the hearing upon his motion to quash the subpoena, and subsequently, upon his objection to introduction of material from the subpoenaed documents, petitioner established the following uncontroverted facts concerning the law partnership of Kash and Kuta, as contained in petitioner's affidavit filed in support of the motion to quash:

"FRANK J. KUTA, being first duly sworn on oath, deposes and says:

That he is the defendant herein;

That he is a duly licensed attorney in the State of Illinois;

That he is a member of the law firm of Kash and Kuta;

That there is no formal or written agreement evidencing the existence of any partnership, although he and Bernard Kash share office expenses and at the end of a respective year divide the income from the operation of the law business conducted under the foregoing name.

That both he and Kash conduct their business with clients on a personal basis and that each personally records his own individual transactions with clients and each keeps his own record of income derived from clients in the conduct of their law business.

That your affiant personally handled all of his individual clients and files and his business matters and all entries of income and costs recovered from said clients were made by him, personally.

That all entries of income received by Bernard Kash from his clients were made personally by Mr. Kash, in his own handwriting.

Your affiant further shows that no other person than he or Bernard Kash had access to the income folders or the records of income received by either of them.

Your affiant further shows that all disbursements for costs or maintenance of the office were handled through a common checking account and checks were signed either by your affiant

(footnote continued)

In *Bellis, supra,* this Court held that a former partner in a law firm which had since been dissolved was not en-

(footnote continued)

or by Mr. Kash and that no other person made entries in the books and records except your affiant and Bernard Kash.

The only instances in which any other person was involved in any of the making or keeping of records of income was in the preparation at the end of each week of tape showing the receipts for such week for the purpose of attaching such tape to deposit slips and in such instances the tape may have been prepared by a secretary under the direction of either your affiant or Bernard Kash." (Affidavit filed in support of motion to quash subpoena duces tecum, R. 33)

Petitioner asserted in his motion to quash, *inter alia,* the following, also uncontroverted:

"(3) The books, records and documents called for in the subpoena include the private, personal papers and records of the defendant and are held and possessed by him in a purely personal capacity.

(4) That said books, records and documents are not held by him simply as a custodian or in a representative capacity but constitute his personal and private papers.

(5) The books, records and documents called for by the subpoena reflect his personal business transactions with his own individual clients and the records which reflect income to the defendant were kept and made by him, personally, in his own handwriting.

(6) The records of the income to this defendant were not kept by an accountant or secretary or any other person and he has never lacked control over their content and location nor has he ever relinquished the right to keep the entry of his income from the view of others.

(7) The financial records called for by the subpoena are not the records of an organized collective entity and each member of the firm of Kash & Kuta keeps and maintains his own individual record of his respective income.

* * *

(10) To compel the production of the records called for in the subpoena would violate the attorney-client privilege by disclosure of transactions had with said clients." (R. 33)

titled to invoke his personal privilege against self-incrimination to justify his refusal to comply with a subpoena requiring production of the partnership's financial records, "in the circumstances of this case." *Id.* at 95, 101.

"The circumstances of this case" in *Bellis* included the following factors which clearly serve materially to distinguish it from the case at bar:

(1) *Bellis* involved a three-man partnership engaged in the practice of law, which employed two additional attorneys, three secretaries, and a receptionist. The Court specifically found that the partnership "employed six persons in addition to its partners, including two other attorneys who practiced law on behalf of the firm, rather than as individuals on their own behalf." *Id.* at 97. In the case at bar, Kash & Kuta were the only practicing attorneys. Their secretary (and only employee) did not keep the books and records.

(2) The records in *Bellis* were "merely the financial books and records of the partnership." *Id.* at 98. This Court noted that no files reflecting work Bellis had personally performed on behalf of his clients were included in the scope of the lower court's order to produce, *id.* at 98, fn. 9, stating that "A different case might be presented if petitioner had been ordered to produce" such records. In the case at bar, the records covered by the court's order *did* include defendant's client records, thus removing the case from *Bellis'* scope.[14]

(3) In *Bellis,* this Court found that the partnership there "did have an established institutional identity inde-

[14] See par. 10 of motion to quash subpoena, R. 33, asserting attorney-client privilege, set forth in footnote 13, p. 20, *supra.*

pendent of its individual partners." *Id.* at 95. This conclusion cannot be reached on the facts of the case at bar, where no such "institutional identity" exists, in that the law firm does not exist apart from its two individual practitioners.

(4) In *Bellis*, unlike the case at bar, "petitioner was content to leave these records with the other members of the partnership at their principal place of business for more than three years after he left the firm." *Id.* at 97.

This Court in *Bellis* repeatedly recognized that its ruling was not a blanket ruling automatically applicable to all cases involving attempts to subpoena partnership records:

> "We think it is similarly clear that partnerships *may and frequently do* represent organized institutional activity so as to preclude any claim of Fifth Amendment privilege with respect to the partnership's financial records." *Id.* at 93. (Emphasis added.)
>
> "Every State has now adopted laws permitting incorporation of professional associations, and increasing numbers of lawyers, doctors, and other professionals are choosing to conduct their business affairs in the corporate form rather than the more traditional partnership. Whether corporation or partnership, *many of these firms will be independent entities, whose financial records are held* by a member of the firm *in a representative capacity.*" *Id.* at 100-01. (Emphasis added.)

By choosing the above phraseology, this Court obviously envisioned partnerships which do *not* so represent "organized institutional activity" as to preclude personal assertion of the privilege by a partner, and which are *not* such "independent entities" that their financial records cannot be held in a purely personal, rather than a representative, capacity.

We submit that the law firm of Kash and Kuta was just such a partnership as this Court envisioned as being outside the holding of *Bellis*.

Only if *Bellis* pronounced a blanket rule applicable to all partnerships could it conceivably be applied to the case at bar, and, clearly, in the light of the foregoing language and the Court's careful limitation of that holding to the particular facts and circumstances of the case then before it, no such all-encompassing rule was laid down therein.

Moreover, it must be remembered that the records in the case at bar were not compelled to be produced until *after* indictment and *after* the case had been set for trial; in *Bellis* the matter was merely in the investigative stage. Together with the facts concerning the operation of the partnership and the manner in which the books were kept, this clearly demonstrates petitioner's personal interest in the records which he was compelled to produce herein. Nor, under these circumstances, can the government maintain that production of the records was necessary to its investigation; its only purpose in compelling petitioner to produce them at that stage of the proceedings was to force him to incriminate himself on the basis of his personal papers, forbidden by the Fifth Amendment.

> "The command of the Fifth Amendment . . . registers an important advance in the development of our liberty—'one of the great landmarks in man's struggle to make himself civilized.' Time has not shown that protection from the evils against which this safeguard was directed is needless or unwarranted. This constitutional protection must not be interpreted in a hostile or niggardly fashion." *Ullmann* v. *United States*, 350 U.S. 422, 426 (1956).

We submit that applying the holding of *Bellis* to the facts of the case at bar constitutes just such a "nig-

gardly fashion'' of constitutional interpretation which this Court has disavowed. It flies in the face of the undisputed facts concerning the operation of the partnership of Kash and Kuta, and renders *Bellis* a universal rule applicable to all partnerships regardless of the individual facts, contrary to the express language of the Court in *Bellis* itself.

The Seventh Circuit's unfounded conclusion that no attorney-client materials were contained in the requested records, (App. A, p. 8, fn. 8), is based on its limited view of "financial records'' as not conceivably revealing privileged attorney-client matters. Although the files may not have contained work performed on behalf of clients, the very identity of an attorney's client, or the fact that the client has retained an attorney, may constitute privileged information. *Tillotson* v. *Boughner,* 350 F.2d 663 (7 Cir. 1965). Moreover, there is nothing of record to dispute petitioner's uncontroverted allegation that "To compel the production of the records called for in the subpoena would violate the attorney-client privilege by disclosure of transactions had with said clients." (R. 33)

Because the Seventh Circuit seriously has misconstrued this Court's decision in *Bellis* v. *United States,* and thereby has approved petitioner's having been compelled to incriminate himself (and to produce privileged attorney-client material), certiorari should be granted herein.

4.

Petitioner's right to a fair trial was violated by the prosecutor's improper conduct during closing argument. In particular, this Court, in the exercise of its supervisory power over the lower federal courts, should review the novel, unprecedented rule adopted by the Seventh Circuit which permits portions of the transcript to be read to the jury during closing argument, since such practice only can serve improperly to highlight selected portions of the evidence.

During closing argument, the prosecutor repeatedly read to the jury portions of the trial transcript, all defense objections thereto being overruled by the court. (Tr. 2087, 2101-02, 2103, 2119-20) This was prejudicial, since it had the effect of improperly emphasizing to the jury certain selected matters in evidence.

In fact, this procedure was contrary to the court's own instruction to the jury that it is solely their duty to determine the facts from the evidence presented in the case, (Tr. 2142), and, moreover, was contrary to the court's position upon defense objections to the prosecution's frequent misstatement of facts. In that regard, the court told the jury that it was their sole province to remember the facts from the evidence which had been presented.[15]

While no federal authority directly in point was discovered, persuasive authority from the Illinois courts condemns reading from a transcript during closing argument to the jury. The rationale for this rule forbidding such

---

[15] See, *e.g.*, Tr. 2095-96, 2125; in each instance, upon defense objection that the prosecution had misstated the evidence, the court advised the jury that they were to remember the evidence.

reading from transcripts has logically and succinctly been stated as follows:

> "Reading from a trial transcript or from a memorandum of the testimony during closing arguments is improper. The jury must pass upon the whole testimony free of the over-emphasis given any portion of it by verbatim repetition during the trial's waning moments." *People* v. *Hoggs,* 17 Ill.App.3d 67, 307 N.E. 2d 800, 802 (1 Dist. 1974).

In reaching this conclusion, and reversing, the Appellate Court relied upon *People* v. *Willy,* 301 Ill. 307, 133 N.E. 859 (1921) (an Illinois Supreme Court case), and *People* v. *Smith,* 105 Ill.App.2d 8, 245 N.E.2d 23 (1 Dist. 1969).

In the case at bar, reading from the transcript over repeated objections served not only improperly to over-emphasize portions of the testimony to the jury, as noted in the cases cited above, but also caused defense counsel to appear to the jury as attempting to keep certain matters from them. The prejudicial impact of the selective over-emphasis cannot be doubted in the face of the jury verdicts finding petitioner guilty only on the Counts involving prosecution witness Vanchieri, whose testimony was improperly read to the jury.

The prejudicial effect of the unfavorable light in which defense counsel necessarily appears in the eyes of the jury, because of his having been forced to object to the prosecution's improper conduct in the jury's presence, cannot realistically be assessed. *Cf. Ginsberg* v. *United States,* 257 F.2d 950, 955 (5 Cir. 1958), holding that failure to object to certain matters in closing argument does not amount to waiver of these errors by the defense, in view of the magnified prejudicial impact which would necessarily follow where counsel is forced to object or move for mistrial in the jury's presence. Here, counsel did object, and the court's overruling of said objections served not only to emphasize the challenged argument but also to convey to the jury the prejudicial impression, understandable in laymen, that defense counsel was trying to conceal something from them.

The panel's conclusion that the prosecuting attorney's closing argument was not improper is based upon (1) its ill-advised adoption of a novel rule permitting portions of the trial transcript to be read in closing argument, (App. A. pp. 12-13); (2) its naively having assumed that the jury could, as astutely as could the panel members, realize that the prosecutor was "merely" arguing from the evidence that Vanchieri was telling the truth, rather than impermissibly putting his own (*i.e.,* the prosecutor's) credibility in issue (App. A, p. 13); and (3) its completely having overlooked the misstatements contained in the prosecutor's argument, amazingly concluding that no such misstatements occurred, and its unfounded assumption that the effects of the single admitted misstatement *re* the statute of limitations were cured by the court's attempted curative instructions. (App. A, pp. 13-14)

Reasoning that since the trial court possesses discretion to have portions of the transcript read to the jury at their request, the panel adopts a similar rule with regard to the propriety of the prosecutor reading selected portions of the transcript during closing argument. (App. A, pp. 12-13) However, this is not a logical extension of the former principle; for it is one thing for a perplexed jury trying to remember the evidence during deliberations to request that portions of the transcript be furnished for their use, and quite another to permit the prosecutor to read portions of the transcript to the jury as part of his argument, where no juror has expressed any uncertainty as to the evidence in question. Permitting such reading

during argument only can serve improperly to highlight certain portions of the evidence to the jury, as is recognized in the Illinois cases cited above. (See App. A, p. 13, fn. 12.)

The panel has cited no federal authority supportive of its ill-advised and novel procedural rule. It seems extremely appropriate that this Court consider this issue rather than permitting the Seventh Circuit's unprecedented adoption of such rule to stand as the law.

Moreover, improper and prejudicial prosecution conduct during closing argument occurred when the court permitted the prosecutor to state that Vanchieri, the crucial prosecution witness, was "telling the truth,"[16] and when the court failed to correct some serious factual misstatements made by the prosecutor.[17] If certiorari is allowed,

---

[16] Tr. 2087-88.

Clearly government counsel may not tell the jury, as he did here, that a witness was telling the truth. In context, the prosecutor's statement was not merely an argument based upon the evidence; counsel's statement herein, put as a matter of fact, necessarily means that counsel believed the witness, thus putting his (counsel's) own credibility in issue. This argument is indisputably improper and constitutes grounds for reversal. *United States* v. *Handman*, 447 F.2d 853, 856 (7 Cir. 1971); *United States* v. *Lamerson*, 457 F.2d 371, 372 (5 Cir. 1972); *Hall* v. *United States*, 419 F.2d 582, 586 (2 Cir. 1969); *Greenberg* v. *United States*, 280 F.2d 472, 474-75 (5 Cir. 1960).

[17] Tr. 2090, 2096, 2107-09, 2125, 2132-39, 2151, 2186-88.

The misstatements—all uncorrected or insufficiently corrected by the court, constitute reversible error herein in light of the weakness of the case against petitioner coupled with the critical importance of the jury's credibility determination as between petitioner and Vanchieri. *Jones* v. *United States*, 338 F.2d 553 (D.C. Cir. 1964), *Corley* v. *United States*, 365 F.2d 884 (D.C. Cir. 1966); *King* v. *United States*, 372 F.2d 383 (D.C. Cir. 1967); see *Cross* v. *United States*, 353 F.2d 454 (D.C. Cir. 1965).

petitioner asks leave to develop these additional matters in his Brief.

To review the Seventh Circuit's novel and unprecedented rule permitting portions of transcripts to be read to the jury during closing arguments, as well as to ascertain whether permitting such reading, together with the other improprieties in closing argument alluded to above, deprived petitioner of a fair trial, certiorari should be allowed.

5.

If petitioner's conviction for having violated the Hobbs Act (Count 2) is overturned, petitioner may not stand convicted for having made a false statement on his income tax return for his failure to have reported, as income, the money which he allegedly received as a part of the Hobbs Act charge.

If the jury's determination, via its finding of guilty upon Count 2, that petitioner did receive $1500 from Vanchieri during 1969, is overturned, this removes the sole factual basis upon which a finding of guilty upon Count 9 may be based. Hence, either reversal or reversal and remand upon Count 2 requires vacature of petitioner's conviction upon Count 9 as well.

Conclusion

For any or all of the foregoing reasons, the Petition for a Writ of Certiorari should be granted.

Respectfully submitted,

GEORGE F. CALLAGHAN
JULIUS LUCIUS ECHELES
CAROLYN JAFFE
Attorneys for Petitioner

APPENDIX

APPENDIX A

In the

United States Court of Appeals

For the Seventh Circuit

No. 74-1920

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Plaintiff-Appellee,

v.

FRANK J. KUTA,

Defendant-Appellant.

Appeal from the United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois, Eastern Division

No. 74 CR 22

Prentice H. Marshall, Judge.

Argued April 14, 1975 — Decided June 30, 1975

Before CASTLE, *Senior Circuit Judge,* STEVENS and SPRECHER, *Circuit Judges.*

CASTLE, *Senior Circuit Judge.* Defendant Frank J. Kuta, alderman of the twenty-third ward of the City of Chicago, Illinois from 1967 to 1971, was convicted by a jury on Counts II, IV, and IX of a ten-count indictment. Subsequently, the trial court acquitted the defendant on Count IV. Count II charged the defendant with extortion

in violation of the Hobbs Act, 18 U.S.C. § 1951 (a), (b)(2),[1] and Count IX charged the defendant with the making of a false statement on his federal income tax return in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 7206(1).[2] From his convictions on Counts II and IX, the defendant appeals. We affirm.

I.

A.

Count II charged the defendant with obstructing, delaying and affecting commerce by obtaining $1500, not due

---

[1] That section provides in part:

(a) Whoever in any way or degree obstructs, delays, or affects commerce or the movement of any articles or commodity in commerce, by robbery or extortion or attempts or conspires so to do, or commits or threatens physical violence to any person or property in furtherance of a plan or purpose to do anything in violation of this section shall be fined not more than $10,000 or imprisoned not more than twenty years, or both.

(b) As used in this section—

* * *

(2) The term "extortion" means the obtaining of property from another, with his consent, induced by wrongful use of actual or threatened force, violence, or fear, or under color of official right.

* * *

[2] That section provides in part:

Any person who—

(1) Declaration under penalties of perjury.—Willfully makes and subscribes any return, statement, or other document, which contains or is verified by a written declaration that it is made under the penalties of perjury, and which he does not believe to be true and correct as to every material matter; . . .

* * *

shall be guilty of a felony and, upon conviction thereof, shall be fined not more than $5,000, or imprisoned not more than 3 years, or both, together with the costs of prosecution.

either him or his office, under color of official right. The indictment further specified that the payment was made because Sam Vanchieri, a realtor, "believed and feared that he would be unable to procure a zoning change on property . . . in the Twenty-third Ward of Chicago, unless he compensated defendant to refrain from objecting to such a change as a member of the Chicago City Council . . . ."

Viewed in the light most favorable to the Government, the evidence shows that Vanchieri believed that the alderman of the ward must approve zoning changes. In an attempt to have property that he owned in the twenty-third ward rezoned, Vanchieri contacted the defendant. At this initial meeting, Kuta told Vanchieri that he had no objection to the proposed zoning change. Nothing more was said. Vanchieri then filed an application for a zoning change, and on November 17, 1969 the requested amendment was passed by the full City Council, alderman Kuta voting in favor of the amendment.

On December 1, 1969 the defendant telephoned Vanchieri and asked to see him. Vanchieri responded that he would be right there. He then put a blank check in his pocket and went to Kuta's office. When he arrived, Vanchieri initiated the conversation by asking how much he owed. He asked that question because, in light of Kuta's telephone call, he "thought [he] owed him something for not objecting to the zoning." In response to Vanchieri's question, Kuta replied "$1500." Vanchieri made out the blank check that he had brought payable to himself, endorsed it, gave it to the defendant, and then left the office.

As a result of the zoning change, Vanchieri constructed three buildings on his newly zoned lots using materials transported in interstate commerce.[3]

The defendant's first attack on his convictions is that the evidence is insufficient to establish the two essential elements of the Hobbs Act offense charged here: interference with commerce, and extortion. *Stirone* v. *United States,* 361 U.S. 212, 218 (1960). Considering first the element of extortion, the type of extortion charged here was the "obtaining of property from another, with his consent, induced . . . under color of official right." 18 U.S.C. § 1951 (b)(2). In *United States* v. *Braasch,* 505 F.2d 139, 151 (7th Cir. 1974), *cert. denied* 43 U.S.L.W. 3551 (U.S. April 14, 1975), we explained:

> The use of office to obtain payments is the crux of the statutory requirement of "under color of official right". . . . So long as the motivation for the payment focuses on the recipient's office, the conduct falls within the ambit of 18 U.S.C. § 1951.

The evidence here is sufficient to show that it was Kuta's office that brought forth Vanchieri's payment, and that therefore the defendant committed extortion. Vanchieri believed that the alderman must approve zoning changes, the approval taking the form of not objecting to the proposed change. In addition to Vanchieri's belief, the record shows that persons contacted the defendant about zoning problems,[4] and a realtor, Irwin Michaels, testified that he

[3] It was stipulated that the furnaces and electrical apparatus used in the buildings were purchased from local suppliers whose inventories were composed of shipments from out of state manufacturers. It was also stipulated that as the inventory is depleted, additional inventory must be ordered by the local suppliers from the out of state manufacturers.

[4] Mary Mager and Bernadine Seguin testified that they contacted the defendant for aid in rezoning property for single family dwellings, and Mager also testified that the defendant agreed to help.

discussed payments for zoning changes with the defendant.[5] The jury could conclude from this evidence that as alderman the defendant exercised power over zoning amendments, and that the payment by Vanchieri was made to influence that aldermanic power. See *United States* v. *Staszcuk,* 502 F.2d 874, 878 (7th Cir. 1974), *rev'd in part on other grounds en banc,* Slip op. No. 73-1869 (May 16, 1975).

Turning to the interstate commerce element, there was evidence that buildings constructed on the rezoned property could not have been constructed under the pre-existing zoning, and it was stipulated that those buildings contained materials that had moved in interstate commerce. *See* note 3 *supra.* Clearly, this is adequate to show that the rezoning affected interstate commerce by facilitating the flow of building materials across state lines. *United States* v. *Staszcuk, supra,* at 878 & n.8. The defendant argues, however, that the evidence is insufficient to show that the rezoning was procured by the extortion, and therefore, that the extortion affected commerce.

Contrary to the defendant's contention, the evidence supports a conclusion by the jury that the zoning change was procured because the defendant agreed not to exercise his independent judgment on the merits of that change in return for payment. Although the payment occurred after the zoning amendment was passed, and the evidence does not indicate that prior to its passage payment was explicitly discussed, the jury could infer that an agreement existed from the fact that payment was expected by the defendant, and that Vanchieri so understood. Kuta's telephone call sparked Vanchieri to bring a blank check to the

[5] This evidence was admitted under the similar acts doctrine, and no error as to its admissibility is raised on appeal.

defendant's office, and to initiate the conversation by asking how much he owed. The testimony shows that Kuta did not express any surprise at this question, nor did he ask Vanchieri what he meant, but simply and tersely responded "$1500." This expectation of payment, further strengthened by Vanchieri's reasons for making the payment, supports a finding that there existed a tacit understanding according to which the defendant refrained from objecting to the zoning amendment in return for a subsequent payment of money, and that this restraint affected the passage of the amendment. Consequently, the jury could find that the extortion affected commerce, and that the defendant thereby violated the Hobbs Act.

B.

The defendant timely objected to the trial court's instruction on the commerce element of the Hobbs Act. The instruction charged the jury that commerce was affected as a matter of law if they found beyond a reasonable doubt that certain facts occurred.[6] The defendant contends that

[6] The instruction read as follows:

> Whoever, in any way or degree, obstructs, delays or affects commerce or the movement of any article or commodity in commerce by extortion violates the law.
>
> * * *
>
> In reference to the statutory requirement of the law that commerce be affected, you are instructed as a matter of law that there was such an effect on interstate commerce and the necessary Federal jurisdiction element is satisfied. . . .
>
> In respect to Count 2, if you find beyond a reasonable doubt that materials used in the construction or furnishing of buildings constructed in 1970 at 5316, 5318 and 5322 South Kilbourn Avenue, Chicago, Illinois, were manufactured or shipped from outside the State of Illinois, and that the buildings which were built on that Kilbourn Avenue property could not have been built under the pre-existing zoning ordinance.

the instruction was erroneous because it is the jury's function to determine whether interstate commerce is affected. He asserts that the result of the court's instruction was to impermissibly direct a verdict on that issue.

We were faced with a similar contention in *United States* v. *Green*, 246 F.2d 155 (7th Cir.), *cert. denied* 355 U.S. 871 (1957). We held there that:

> It was clearly the function of the court to determine whether interstate commerce was affected and whether the court had jurisdiction under the Act. As stated in Hulahan v. United States, [214 F.2d 441, 446 (8th Cir.), *cert. denied* 348 U.S. 856 (1954)]: "We think it was for the court, and not the jury, to determine whether the Government's evidence, if believed, would bring the activities of the defendant within the statute and sustain federal jurisdiction." See also Nick v. U.S., 8 Cir., 122 F.2d 660, 673, 138 A.L.R. 791.

Id. at 160-161.

Similarly, in *United States* v. *Hyde*, 448 F.2d 815, 839 & n.34 (5th Cir. 1971), *cert. denied* 404 U.S. 1058 (1972), the court, after a comprehensive review of the case law, concluded that it was for the jury to determine if the facts occurred, but that the trial court should determine if commerce was affected.

The defendant's argument fails to draw the distinction between factual determinations which the jury must make, and the legal impact of those determinations which the trial court is competent to evaluate. The cases on which the defendant relies are inapposite because the instructions in those cases pre-empted jury determinations of factual issues.[7] Here, however, the instruction clearly left the factual issues for the jury, and thus we find no error.

[7] *See, e.g., United States* v. *Skinner*, 437 F.2d 164 (5th Cir. 1971); *United States* v. *Raub*, 177 F.2d 312 (7th Cir. 1949); *United States* v. *Gollin*, 166 F.2d 123 (3d Cir.), *cert. denied* 333 U.S. 875 (1948).

The defendant also contends that the instruction was erroneous because it failed to include a definition of commerce. A definition was not necessary, however, because what constitutes interstate commerce and whether it was affected were matters of law that the trial court resolved. The instruction was proper.

II.

The defendant was a member of the law firm of Kash and Kuta. Prior to trial, a subpoena was issued directing the defendant to produce "[a]ll partnership books and records for the partnership of Kash and Kuta for the years 1965 through and including 1970." The defendant moved to quash the subpoena, arguing that it violated his Fifth Amendment privilege against compulsory self-incrimination. The Government, seeking only the partnership's financial records, supports the issuance of the subpoena by relying on *Bellis* v. *United States*, 417 U.S. 85 (1974), and the defendant, in turn, contends that he falls outside the scope of that decision.[8]

In *Bellis*, the Court held that a former partner of a small, three-partner Pennsylvania law firm could not in-

[8] As was the subpoena in *Bellis*, the subpoena here was broadly worded. *See* 417 U.S. at 86. In the hearing before the trial court on the motion to quash, the defendant attacked the scope of the subpoena, and government counsel in response stated that "it calls generally for financial records." Further, the Government's trial brief in opposition to the motion to quash states that "[w]e are seeking here only those financial documents which indicate the fees received by the partnership for doing legal work for clients." There is no indication that any other type of partnership records were produced in response to the subpoena or introduced at trial. Accordingly, we narrowly view the subpoena as requiring only the production of financial records. Therefore, as in *Bellis*, we are not faced with the situation where the partnership records and files produced contain work performed on behalf of clients. *See* 417 U.S. at 87 n.1, 98 n.9.

voke his privilege against self-incrimination to justify a refusal to comply with a subpoena requiring production of that partnership's financial records. The Court's holding was structured from the underlying consideration that the privilege is a purely personal one, applying only to an individual's own words and papers, and that consequently, an individual cannot rely on the privilege to avoid producing the records of a separate collective entity. From this base, the Court then went on to determine that a partnership may have an independent organizational identity apart from its individual partners, and found that in the circumstances of the case before it, the three-member partnership did have such an existence. Finally, the Court concluded that the particular financial records in issue were partnership records, and that they were therefore held in a representative, rather than a personal, capacity. As a result, the privilege was not available to the partner against whom the subpoena was directed.

We believe that *Bellis* controls the situation here. First, while there is variation from the factors relied on in *Bellis*, *see* 417 U.S. at 95-97, we nonetheless are convinced that the evidence shows a partnership having an independent identity apart from its two individual practitioners. The association of Kash and Kuta was not temporary, the association having formed in 1963. Although there was no formal partnership agreement, the income of the firm, which included Kuta's aldermanic salary and expense allowance, was divided equally, and expenses were also shared.[9] While each practitioner individually recorded

[9] Like Pennsylvania, Illinois has adopted the Uniform Partnership Act. ILL. REV. STAT. ch. 106½, §§ 1-43. Under that Act, §7(4) provides:

> The receipt by a person of a share of the profits of a business is prima facie evidence that he is a partner in the business. . . .

fees received in a cash receipts journal, each had access to the journal, and custody of the journal generally depended on who made the last entry. The firm of Kash and Kuta prepared partnership tax returns from the journal. Further, the firm employed two full time secretaries who did work for both members of the firm, and another lawyer was engaged for a short duration. Additionally, one of the full time secretaries could sign "office account" checks.

Moreover, "equally important," *id.* at 97, is the fact that the financial records cannot be considered personal records to which the privilege would attach because there could be no expectation of privacy with respect to those records. In discussing one of the reasons behind the unavailability of the privilege to an individual seeking to withhold records of an artificial organization, the Court stated:

> The Court's decisions holding the privilege inapplicable to the records of a collective entity also reflect a second, though obviously interrelated policy underlying the privilege, the protection of an individual's right to a " 'private enclave where he may lead a private life.' " . . .
>
> But a substantial claim of privacy or confidentiality cannot often be maintained with respect to the financial records of an organized collective entity. Control of such records is generally strictly regulated by statute or by the rules and regulations of the organization, and access to the records is generally guaranteed to others in the organization. . . . And here lies the modern-day relevance of the visitorial powers doctrine relied upon by the Court in *Wilson* [*Wilson* v. *United States,* 221 U.S. 361 (1971)] and the other cases dealing with corporate records; the Court's holding that no privilege exists "where, by virtue of their character and the rules of law applicable to them, the books and papers are held subject to examination by the [state]," 221 U.S., at 382, can easily be understood as a recognition that corporate records do not contain the requisite element of privacy or confidentiality essential for the privilege to attach.

Id. at 91-92.[10]

Accordingly, in concluding that the partner held the subpoenaed records in a representative capacity, the Court primarily relied on Pennsylvania partnership law which provides, *inter alia,* that: partners are accountable to the partnership as fiduciaries; that partners have the right of access and inspection of partnership books; and that partners have a right to formal accounting as to partnership affairs. *Id.* at 98-99.

As noted previously, Illinois has adopted the Uniform Partnership Act, *see* note 9 *supra,* and the Pennsylvania provisions relied on by the Court find their identical counterparts in the Illinois statute. *Compare* PA. STAT. ANN. tit. 59, §§ 51-56 *with* ILL. REV. STAT. ch. 106½ §§ 18-23. Consequently, as in *Bellis,* the records sought here could not be considered personal records to which the privilege would attach.

---

[10] Similarly, in *Couch* v. *United States,* 409 U.S. 322, 335-336 (1973), where it was held that a taxpayer may not invoke the privilege against self-incrimination to prevent the production of business and tax records in the possession of the taxpayer's accountant, the Court stated:

> . . . [T]here can be little expectation of privacy where records are handed to an accountant, knowing that mandatory disclosures of much of the information therein is required in an income tax return. . . . Petitioner seeks extensions of constitutional protections against self-incrimination in the very situation where obligations of disclosure exist and under a system largely dependent upon honest self-reporting to survive. Accordingly, petitioner here cannot reasonably claim, either for Fourth or Fifth Amendment purposes, an expectation of protected privacy or confidentiality. (Footnote omitted.)

In light of the above, the defendant was obligated to comply with the subpoena for the partnership records despite the fact that they may have incriminated him. The subpoena did not violate the defendant's privilege against self-incrimination because the privilege was inapplicable.[11]

III.

The defendant argues that he was deprived of a fair trial by government counsel's prejudicial conduct during closing argument. He argues that the closing argument was improper because government counsel: (1) read from the trial transcript; (2) stated to the jury that witness Vanchieri "told you the truth;" and (3) made various misstatements of fact.

First, the defendant argues that reading from the trial transcript is improper because it unduly emphasizes selected portions of the evidence. In a similar situation, however, it is recognized that it is within the discretion of the trial court whether to read portions of the trial transcript back to the jury at its request. *United States* v. *McCoy,* Slip op. No. 75-1040, at 5 (7th Cir., May 28, 1975); *Stone* v. *United States,* 506 F.2d 561, 564 (8th Cir. 1974). The concern for undue emphasis is even less where the reading occurs in the context of closing arguments which review the entire evidence for the jury. Further, there is no reason to establish a *per se* rule penalizing accuracy, thereby putting a premium on counsel's memory. *See Byrnes* v. *United States,* 327 F.2d 825, 840 (9th Cir.), *cert. denied* 377 U.S. 970 (1964). Consequently, we think

[11] The defendant argues that this case is distinguishable from *Bellis* because a trial subpoena is involved. The availability of the privilege, however, is idependent of the stage to which proceedings directed at the individual have advanced. *See* 417 U.S. at 97 n. 8.

it is also within the discretion of the trial court whether to permit counsel to read from the trial transcript during closing argument.[12] Here, the trial transcript excerpts read were short and accurately quoted, and there was no abuse of discretion.

Second, the defendant contends that government counsel, by stating to the jury that Vanchieri "told you the truth," improperly placed before the jury his own credibility and also implied knowledge of evidence that was unavailable to that body. We agree that if this occurred, there would be error. *United States* v. *Handman,* 447 F.2d 853, 856 (7th Cir. 1971). That, however, is not the case here. Government counsel's remark was made after arguing that evidence which the defendant contended contradicted a prior statement made by Vanchieri was, in fact, consistent with that statement. Thus, government counsel's remark that Vanchieri's prior statement was truthful derived solely from a comparison of the evidence before the jury and therefore it did not put his credibility in issue or carry any inference of outside knowledge. *United States* v. *Carzoli,* 447 F.2d 774, 781 (7th Cir. 1971), *cert. denied* 404 U.S. 1015 (1972).

Finally, the defendant asserts that in four instances in closing argument government counsel made serious misstatements of the evidence. As to three of these instances,

[12] We therefore disagree with the apparent adoption by Illinois of a rule prohibiting transcript reading during closing argument. *People* v. *Willy,* 301 Ill. 307, 328, 133 N.E. 859, 868 (1921); *People* v. *Hoggs,* 17 Ill. App. 3d 67, 70, 307 N.E.2d 800, 802 (1974). Other courts, however, have committed the matter to the trial court's discretion. *See, e.g. Floen* v. *Sund,* 255 Minn. 211, 218, 96 N.W.2d 563, 568 (1959); *Randall* v. *Steelman,* 294 S.W.2d 588, 594 (Mo. App. 1956); *Douglas* v. *Duvall,* 5 Utah 2d 429, 431, 304 P.2d 373, 374 (1956).

we find there to be no misstatements at all, but only legitimate argument based on evidence before the jury. Government counsel cannot be limited to a sterile recitation of uncontroverted facts. *United States* v. *Greene*, 497 F.2d 1068, 1085 (7th Cir. 1974). The only actually erroneous statement made by government counsel was that the defendant was not indicted on the Irwin Michaels transaction, *see supra* at page 4 & n.5, because the statute of limitations had run. That mistake, however, was completely rectified by the trial court's strong curative instruction.[13]

IV.

Count IX of the indictment, charging the defendant with making a false statement on his federal income tax return, was based on the failure of the defendant to report the $1500 paid to him by Vanchieri for the zoning change. He does not attack his conviction on that Count except insofar as to contend that if the evidence is found to be insufficient to show Hobbs Act extortion, then his false statement conviction must also fall. That not being the case, and there being no other error, the finding of guilty on Count IX must stand.

The convictions on Counts II and IX are

AFFIRMED.

A true Copy:
Teste:

.....
Clerk of the United States Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit

---

[13] That instruction stated:

During the closing argument for the Government, reference was made to the so-called statute of limitations. The statute of limitations applicable to the type conduct charged here is a five-year period, and if, as Michaels testified, a conversation did occur in 1968 or early 1969, the statute of limitations would not have run for a corresponding period of time, that is to say, until late 1973 or early 1974.

APPENDIX B

UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS
For the Seventh Circuit
Chicago, Illinois 60604

July 29, 1975

Before

Hon. LATHAM CASTLE, Sr. Circuit Judge
Hon. JOHN PAUL STEVENS, Circuit Judge
Hon. ROBERT A. SPRECHER, Circuit Judge

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Plaintiff-Appellee,

No. 74-1920 vs.

FRANK J. KUTA,

Defendant-Appellant.

Appeal from the United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois, Eastern Division.

(74 Cr 22)

On consideration of the petition for rehearing and suggestion that it be reheard *en banc* filed in the above-entitled cause, no judge in active service having requested a vote thereon, nor any judge having voted to grant the suggestion, and all of members of the panel having voted to deny a rehearing,

IT IS ORDERED that the petition for a rehearing in the above-entitled cause be, and the same is hereby, DENIED.

Supreme Court, U. S.
FILED
NOV 18 1975
MICHAEL RODAK, JR., CLERK

No. 75-307

In the Supreme Court of the United States

OCTOBER TERM, 1975

FRANK J. KUTA, PETITIONER

v.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

ON PETITION FOR A WRIT OF CERTIORARI TO THE UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS FOR THE SEVENTH CIRCUIT

MEMORANDUM FOR THE UNITED STATES IN OPPOSITION

ROBERT H. BORK,
Solicitor General,
Department of Justice,
Washington, D.C. 20530.

INDEX

CITATIONS

Cases:	Page
Bellis v. *United States*, 417 U.S. 85	7, 8, 9
Glasser v. *United States*, 315 U.S. 60	5
Mims v. *United States*, 375 F.2d 135	6
Nick v. *United States*, 122 F.2d 660	6
Stirone v. *United States*, 361 U.S. 212	4
Stone v. *United States*, 506 F.2d 561, certiorari denied, 420 U.S. 978	9
United States v. *Braasch*, 505 F.2d 139, certiorari denied, 421 U.S. 910	4
United States v. *De Palma*, 414 F.2d 394, certiorari denied, 396 U.S. 1046	9
United States v. *Gollin*, 166 F.2d 123, certiorari denied, 333 U.S. 875	6
United States v. *Green*, 246 F.2d 155, certiorari denied, 355 U.S. 871	6
United States v. *Hyde*, 448 F.2d 815, certiorari denied, 404 U.S. 1058	6, 7
United States v. *McCoy*, 517 F.2d 41	9
United States v. *Raub*, 177 F.2d 312	6
United States v. *Skinner*, 437 F.2d 164	6
Constitution and statutes:	
U. S. Constitution, Fifth Amendment	8
18 U.S.C. 1951(a)	2, 4
18 U.S.C. 1951(b)(2)	2, 4
26 U.S.C. 7206(1)	2

In the Supreme Court of the United States

OCTOBER TERM, 1975

No. 75-307

FRANK J. KUTA, PETITIONER

v.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

ON PETITION FOR A WRIT OF CERTIORARI TO THE UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS FOR THE SEVENTH CIRCUIT

MEMORANDUM FOR THE UNITED STATES IN OPPOSITION

Petitioner contends that (1) the evidence is insufficient to sustain his conviction under the Hobbs Act; (2) the district court erred in its instruction to the jury on an element of the Hobbs Act offense (affect on commerce); (3) the district court erred in denying his motion to quash a subpoena for financial records of a partnership; and (4) aspects of the government's closing argument denied him a fair trial.

Following a jury trial in the United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois, petitioner was convicted for extortion under color of official right, in violation of the Hobbs Act, 18 U.S.C. 1951(a), (b)(2)[1] (count 2) and making a false statement on his federal income tax return, in violation of 26 U.S.C. 7206(1) (count 9).[2] He was sentenced to concurrent terms of six months' imprisonment (Pet. 6). The court of appeals affirmed (Pet. App. A). A petition for rehearing *en banc* was denied (Pet. App. B).

The evidence at trial showed that petitioner was a ward alderman in Chicago and a member of Chicago's City Council. He is also an attorney. Sometime before July 1969, petitioner was contacted by Sam Vanchieri, a realtor and an acquaintance, about approving a zoning change in petitioner's ward which Mr. Vanchieri was considering submitting to the City

---

[1] That section provides in pertinent part:

> (a) Whoever in any way or degree obstructs, delays, or affects commerce or the movement of any article or commodity in commerce, by * * * extortion * * * shall be fined not more than $10,000 or imprisoned not more than twenty years, or both.
>
> (b) As used in this section—
>
> * * * * *
>
> (2) The term "extortion" means the obtaining of property from another, with his consent, * * * under color of official right.
>
> * * * * *

[2] The indictment contained 10 counts; petitioner was acquitted on all but counts 2 and 9 (Pet. App. 1-2).

Council with respect to some of his property. Petitioner told Mr. Vanchieri that he had no objection to the proposed change. Mr. Vanchieri subsequently filed the zoning application, which was passed by the full City Council on November 17, 1969. Petitioner voted in favor of the amendment (Pet. App. 3).[3]

On December 1, 1969, petitioner telephoned Mr. Vanchieri and asked to see him. Though no money had been mentioned by either man up to this point, Mr. Vanchieri brought a blank check with him to petitioner's office. Thinking that he "owed [petitioner] something for not objecting to the zoning" (Tr. 140-141), Mr. Vanchieri initiated his meeting with petitioner by asking how much he owed. In response, petitioner said "$1500." Mr. Vanchieri made out the blank check for that amount, payable to himself; he then endorsed it, gave it to petitioner, and left the office (Pet. App. 3).

As a result of the zoning change, Mr. Vanchieri constructed three buildings on the newly zoned lots using materials transported in interstate commerce (Pet. App. 4).

1. Petitioner contends that his conviction for violation of the Hobbs Act cannot stand because the evidence was insufficient to establish the necessary elements of extortion and interference with commerce

---

[3] While an alderman in the City of Chicago, as a member of the City Council, plays only a peripheral role in a change in zoning ordinances (Tr. 20-25; 1613-1615), there was testimony of numerous instances in which those seeking rezoning paid money to the ward alderman (see Tr. 369-370, 373-374, 461, 752-753, 771, 1078-1083).

(Pet. 8). See *Stirone* v. *United States*, 361 U.S. 212, 218. But the evidence here is clearly sufficient to permit the jury to find both elements. The term "extortion" as used in 18 U.S.C. 1951(a) is defined as "the obtaining of property from another, with his consent, * * * under color of official right" (18 U.S.C. 1951 (b)(2)). Mr. Vanchieri solicited the help of petitioner in his capacity as ward alderman and city councilor; petitioner helped Mr. Vanchieri in his official capacity and was thereafter paid by Mr. Vanchieri, who believed he owed petitioner for his help. This evidence was sufficient for the jury to find that "it was [petitioner's] office that brought forth Vanchieri's payment" (Pet. App. 4). See *United States* v. *Braasch*, 505 F. 2d 139, 151 (C.A. 7), certiorari denied, 421 U.S. 910.

There is no question that the rezoning affected interstate commerce (see Pet. 13), but petitioner contends the evidence was insufficient to show that the rezoning (and therefore the affect on commerce) was procured by the extortion. Though there is no evidence of money being discussed before the zoning amendment passed, or of an explicit agreement, the evidence supports an inference that petitioner and Mr. Vanchieri had a tacit agreement in which Mr. Vanchieri would be expected to pay for petitioner's acquiesence. The two men met and discussed the proposed zoning change. Mr. Vanchieri testified that he anticipated having to make a payment to insure that his proposal would be adopted. When he asked petitioner how much he owed, petitioner named his

price. Petitioner accepted the payment without hesitation and, by so doing, obtained property not due him or his office under color of official right. As in conspiracy cases, an agreement need not be shown by the explicit admissions of the principals involved; "common purpose and plan may be inferred upon a 'development and collocation of circumstances.'" *Glasser* v. *United States*, 315 U.S. 60, 80. Since the evidence showed that petitioner and Mr. Vanchieri tacitly reached a common understanding, the court of appeals was correct in holding that the evidence in this case was sufficient for the jury to find that petitioner had violated the Hobbs Act (Pet. App. 5-6).

2. Petitioner contends that the district court erred by instructing the jury that commerce was affected as a matter of law if it found that certain facts had occurred, because, he argues, it is the jury's function to determine whether interstate commerce is affected, and the effect of the instruction was impermissibly to direct a verdict on that issue (Pet. 15-17).[4] The

[4] The instruction read in pertinent part (Tr. 2155-2158):

> In reference to the statutory requirement of the law that commerce be affected, you are instructed as a matter of law that there was such an effect on interstate commerce and the necessary Federal jurisdictional element is satisfied if you find beyond a reasonable doubt that materials used in the construction or furnishing of buildings constructed in 1970 at 5316, 5318 and 5322 South Kilbourn Avenue, Chicago, Illinois, were manufactured or shipped from outside the State of Illinois, and that the buildings which were built on that Kilbourn Avenue property could not have been built under the pre-existing zoning ordinance.

courts of appeals, however, have uniformly held that while it is for the jury to determine if the alleged facts have been proven, it is for the courts to determine whether those facts meet the statutory requirement of affecting commerce. See *United States* v. *Hyde*, 448 F. 2d 815, 839 (C.A. 5), certiorari denied, 404 U.S. 1058;[5] *Nick* v. *United States*, 122 F. 2d 660, 673 (C.A. 8); *United States* v. *Green*, 246 F. 2d 155 (C.A. 7), certiorari denied, 355 U.S. 871.

Petitioner confuses the distinction between questions of fact and questions of law. The cases he cites (Pet. 17),[6] as the court of appeals correctly pointed out (Pet. App. 7), dealt with instructions that preempted jury determinations of factual issues. That is not the case here. The court left all factual issues for the jury but properly kept as a question of law the

[5] In *Hyde* the court of appeals stated (448 F.2d at 839, 841; footnote omitted):

> All of the Hobbs Act cases agree that the court should determine whether the facts alleged meet the statutory requirement of affecting interstate commerce. * * * This approach is used rather than telling the jury in general terms what it means to affect commerce and allowing the jury to determine whether the facts meet this criterion, because this is a jurisdictional element for which the court has a great responsibility. It is for the jury to determine whether the facts have been proved, that is, *whether they believe the evidence* with respect to the factual elements of the indictment as explained in the charge. [Emphasis in original.]

[6] *United States* v. *Skinner*, 437 F. 2d 164 (C.A. 5); *Mims* v. *United States*, 375 F. 2d 135 (C.A. 5); *United States* v. *Raub*, 177 F. 2d 312 (C.A. 7); *United States* v. *Gollin*, 166 F. 2d 123 (C.A. 3), certiorari denied, 333 U.S. 875.

issue whether the facts, if found, would satisfy the jurisdictional requirement. See *United States* v. *Hyde*, *supra*. Since the question whether a certain act "affects commerce" is for the court, there was no error, as petitioner claims (Pet. 18), in not instructing the jury on the meaning of "commerce" (see Pet. App. 8).

3. Petitioner contends that his privilege against compelled self-incrimination was violated when he was required to comply with a subpoena ordering him to produce financial records of the law partnership of which he was a member (Pet. 18-19). The validity of this claim turns upon the application of *Bellis* v. *United States*, 417 U.S. 85, in which this Court held the privilege against self-incrimination unavailable to a partner in a law firm which had "an established institutional identity independent of its individual partners" (417 U.S. at 95), where a subpoena sought financial records of the firm held by the partner in a representative capacity (*id.* at 97).

We agree with the court of appeals that *Bellis* controls the situation here (see Pet. App. 9-12). Although there is some variation from the factors discussed in *Bellis* (see Pet. 21-23), it is not so substantial as to preclude a finding that the law firm had an "independent identity." As the court of appeals stated (Pet. App. 9-10; footnote omitted):

> The association of Kash and Kuta was not temporary, the association having formed in 1963. Although there was no formal partnership agreement, the income of the firm, which included Kuta's aldermanic salary and expense allowance,

> was divided equally, and expenses were also shared. While each practitioner individually recorded fees received in a cash receipts journal, each had access to the journal, and custody of the journal generally depended on who made the last entry. The firm of Kash and Kuta prepared partnership tax returns from the journal. Further, the firm employed two full time secretaries who did work for both members of the firm, and another lawyer was engaged for a short duration. Additionally, one of the full time secretaries could sign "office account" checks.

Moreover, the subpoena sought financial records of the firm,[7] held by petitioner in his representative capacity. Illinois partnership law treats partners' obligations and rights with regard to a firm's financial records in the same manner as Pennsylvania law (see Pet. App. 11), which the Court considered as a significant factor in *Bellis* (417 U.S. at 98-99). These obligations and rights belie petitioner's claim (Pet. 23) of a personal interest in the records sufficient to afford Fifth Amendment protection. Thus, the court of appeals correctly concluded that "[t]he subpoena did not violate [petitioner's] privilege against self-

[7] Petitioner claims (Pet. 21) that *Bellis* is inapplicable because the district court's order included client records. But the court of appeals viewed the subpoena as requiring only the production of financial records, and there is no indication of any other type of partnership records having been produced in response to the subpoena or introduced at trial (Pet. App. 8, n. 8).

incrimination because the privilege was inapplicable" (Pet. App. 12).[8]

4. Finally, petitioner contends that several aspects of government counsel's closing argument denied him a fair trial. The court of appeals correctly held that these claims are not meritorious.

a. Petitioner claims that the prosecutor exceeded the boundaries of legitimate comment by reading selected excerpts from the trial transcript during closing argument. He contends that the reading unduly emphasized certain evidence and was in derogation of the jury's duty to be the sole determiner of the facts (Pet. 25).

Petitioner admits that he has no federal authority to support his argument. The closest analogy, however, is the reading of testimony to a jury on request, where the option lies almost exclusively in the sound discretion of the trial judge. See *United States* v. *McCoy*, 517 F.2d 41, 44 (C.A. 7); *Stone* v. *United States*, 506 F.2d 561 (C.A. 8), certiorari denied, 420 U.S. 978; *United States* v. *De Palma*, 414 F.2d 394 (C.A. 9), certiorari denied, 396 U.S. 1046. There is no more reason to establish a *per se* rule prohibiting the reading of the record in closing argument. As the court of appeals stated (Pet. App. 12-13):

> The concern for undue emphasis is even less where the reading occurs in the context of clos-

[8] Petitioner mistakenly contends that *Bellis* is inapposite also because it concerned a grand jury subpoena and the instant case involves a trial subpoena (Pet. 23). As the court of appeals noted, however (Pet. App. 12, n. 11), the "avail-

> ing arguments which review the entire evidence for the jury. Further, there is no reason to establish a *per se* rule penalizing accuracy, thereby putting a premium on counsel's memory. *See Byrnes* v. *United States*, 327 F.2d 825, 840 (9th Cir.), *cert. denied* 377 U.S. 970 (1964). Consequently, we think it is also within the discretion of the trial court whether to permit counsel to read from the trial transcript during closing argument.

Here the excerpts were short and accurately quoted (*id.* at 13). The reading was the functional equivalent of counsel's selecting from memory evidence that he wishes to emphasize, or passing documentary evidence to the jury to read during argument. The court of appeals correctly found that there was no abuse of discretion in these circumstances (*ibid.*).

b. Petitioner claims that a statement of the prosecutor concerning the truthfulness of Mr. Vanchieri's testimony was an impermissible statement of personal belief (Pet. 28, n. 16). But petitioner's argument fails when the prosecutor's statement is put in context, as the court of appeals correctly noted (Pet. App. 13):

---

ability of the privilege * * * is independent of the stage to which proceedings directed at the individual have advanced." The court there cited note 8 in the *Bellis* opinion (417 U.S. at 97-98), which indicates that whether the investigative or prosecutorial focus is on the individual or the entity is immaterial in determining the individual's right to withhold the entity's records.

> Government counsel's remark was made after arguing that evidence which [petitioner] contended contradicted a prior statement made by Vanchieri was, in fact, consistent with that statement. Thus, government counsel's remark that Vanchieri's prior statement was truthful derived solely from a comparison of the evidence before the jury and therefore it did not put his credibility in issue or carry any inference of outside knowledge. *United States* v. *Carzoli*, 447 F.2d 774, 781 (7th Cir. 1971), *cert. denied*, 404 U.S. 1015 (1972).[9]

It is therefore respectfully submitted that the petition for a writ of certiorari should be denied.

ROBERT H. BORK,
Solicitor General.

NOVEMBER 1975.

---

[9] Petitioner alludes to but fails to describe other instances of error in the prosecutor's closing argument. The court of appeals rejected each of these claims, and we rely on its opinion (Pet. App. 13-14).

☆ U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE: 1975 597001 118